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SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

CD NO.

## INFORMATION REPORT

PROJECT: West Germany

DATE DISTR. 15 September 1953

SUBJECT: Views of Niekisch on East German Uprising

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE ACQUIRED: 25X1A

NO. OF ENCL. (LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO.

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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25X1A

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Professor Ernst Niekisch

from the East Berlin Humboldt University. Niekisch is a member of the Presidium of the East German National Council. Niekisch asserted that he had voiced his opinion on the causes underlying the June uprising to Otto Grotewohl in the presence of leading party functionaries and civil servants. Niekisch stated that he had reproached Grotewohl and his government with having violated the constitution for years. This constitution had been made into the instrument of a clique of party officers lusting for power. The Soviets had been informed in a misleading way on the true situation in East Germany. This wrong information had influenced the Russians in their assessment of the world situation. The discontent and bitterness of the East German population, which had been caused by a wrong judgement of the situation, a failure to take the correct measures and terror acts against the people, had enabled the Americans to start an operation designed to duplicate the Korea situation in Europe. The danger of a third world war had been very real on 16 June. Niekisch said that he had demanded that Grotewohl completely reshuffle the East German government, liquidate the predominant position of the SED, and eliminate all those elements which had been compromised by the use of terror. Niekisch's speech was received in icy silence. Only Grotewohl thanked the speaker by shaking his hand and saying Niekisch should have voiced his warning earlier. Niekisch replied that he had been given to understand that his criticism was not asked for.

2. Niekisch then provided information on the Soviet opinion on the background of the June uprising. According to the Russians, the Americans had staged the uprising in order to test the reaction of the Russians, and their means of intervention. The Russians believed that the Americans had planned to have the East German government buildings occupied by organized workers' gangs, set them on fire, and then provoke clashes with the VP and Soviet troops by staging a monster procession of the Berlin trade unions across the zonal boundary. The Americans had allegedly planned to dispatch some of their tank units across the zonal boundary for the protection of the Berlin population and then to proclaim a state of emergency for all of Berlin on behalf of the four-power Control Council. The Americans, according to Ernst Niekisch, had taken into consideration that the Soviets would counter-attack if they

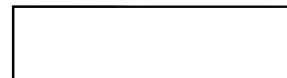
25X1A

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- 2 -

25X1A



had planned to withdraw after a few hours of delaying action, declare the Soviets as aggressors and thus to open the first phase of a conflict similar to that in Korea. Through this type of action, more prudent circles in Washington were to have been placed before a fait accompli. The operation was, allegedly, backed by the same influential representatives of the US armament industry which pushed Syngman Rhee to prolong the war in Korea. This line of policy was also supported by American politicians who considered an attack against the USSR as the best form of defense. Niekisch pointed out that the Russians had arrived at this interpretation of the situation after interrogating Western agents arrested in the course of the June uprisings.

25X1



3. Niekisch stated that he believed in the necessity of the following measures:

- a. Doubling of the Soviet Forces in Central Europe;
- b. Continuation of a soft policy;
- c. Reduction of the influence held by the Communist Party;
- d. Reform of the government;
- e. Strengthening by the Soviets of those British and French circles which oppose the US policy in Europe and the world.

4. According to Niekisch, the Russians feared that new uprisings would occur.

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